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OVER 200 NON PROFITS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS TO GOVERNOR PATERSON: CUTS ALONE WILL DEVASTATE NEW YORK'S FUTURE

Groups Who Provide Services to Seniors, Children, Homeless, Mentally Ill, People with AIDS Call on Paterson to Stop Exempting Wealthy New Yorkers from Budget Pain

New York City— On the day Governor Paterson was set to announce \$2 billion in budget cuts, the One New York: Fighting for Fairness Coalition and the Better Choice Budget Campaign called on the Governor and legislative leaders today to abandon a budget policy that calls on poor and vulnerable New Yorkers alone to bear the burden of the state's fiscal crisis.

Together the two coalitions representing more than 200 non-profit organizations, service providers and unions that supply front line services to many of New York's most vulnerable citizens called on Paterson to examine revenue options rather than gutting services to close the state's huge budget gap. Over 300 New Yorkers who depend on vital services from the City and State joined the rally. Similar rallies also occurred today in Albany, Buffalo, Rochester, Utica, Binghamton, and in Central Islip on Long Island.

"Last week, Mayor Bloomberg leveled with New Yorkers that we cannot cut our way out of the city's fiscal crisis. His cuts and tax increases will be painful but nothing compared to balancing the city or state budgets just by cutting services— that would not only undermine our ability to serve our most vulnerable, it would be devastating our state's future. Governor Paterson should follow the Mayor's lead on taxes and call on all New Yorkers— not just the poorest New Yorkers— to sacrifice," said **Wayne Ho, Executive Director of the Coalition of Asian American Children and Families.**

"Even prior to the immediate crisis, New York had already made deep cuts in vital services, negatively impacting every community. Legal services that help poor New Yorkers stay in their homes have been slashed as record numbers of homeless seek shelter. Programs that keep youth on the right track and in school and counseling for high school students who seek a better future have faced reductions. Across the board cuts not only put vulnerable New Yorkers at risk, they create job loss and reduce revenues spent in our communities," said **Stephan Russo, Executive Director Goddard Riverside Community Center.**

"Amazingly only the neediest New Yorkers, who cannot afford to go without, are being asked to sacrifice. On the heels of an election where the American people stood up for change, it is shocking that state and city budget cutters maintain the status quo and seek to balance the budget on the backs of the middle class and the poor, and are not asking the rich to do their part," said **Ed Ott, Executive Director, New York City Central Labor Council.**

"While no one likes tax increases, all New Yorkers will need to sacrifice to get our state through this crisis. Everyone, including New York's wealthiest, will have to do their part. The most effective way to make the state stronger through this crisis and minimize the harm to the economy and vulnerable populations is using every means at the state's disposal such as excess reserve funds and progressive revenue enhancements. It is plainly untrue that asking those who benefited from the economic boom to contribute more will drive them away," added **James Parrott, Deputy Director & Chief Economist, Fiscal Policy Institute**

New York has been here before and has proven resilient in times of crisis. Following the economic downturn after September 11, the national recession, and the burst of the dot.com bubbles, New York faced a similar crisis – albeit on a smaller scale. At that time all New Yorkers were called to sacrifice. In addition to budget cuts on critical programs for New York’s children and families, New York temporarily increased income tax rates. The State employed a temporary top rate of 7.25 percent for single filers with incomes over \$100,000 and 7.7 percent on income over \$500,000. The increase expired in 2005. According to the Fiscal Policy Institute, the increases had no negative economic impact. In fact, during this time, high-wage earners saw rapid income growth and the number of high-earners living in New York grew dramatically and the state experienced job growth.

“The chair of Governor Paterson’s own council of economic advisors, Joseph Stiglitz, in March advised him to consider revenue as part of a balanced approach of shared sacrifice rather than closing the budget gap through cuts alone. Attempting to close a budget gap of this size through cuts alone will wreak havoc on New York City and force us back to the bad old days of broken down subways, unsafe parks and failing schools and will impede state and local government from addressing already increasing human needs,” said **Raquel Batista, Executive Director, Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights.**

“Cuts don’t come without a price— a human price— and that’s the context everyone needs to keep in mind as we work our way through these fiscal problems. We need a broader solution that also includes developing new revenues so that we can save the programs and services our children, our elderly, our sick and our disabled depend on. We are confident that New Yorkers will come together to prevent deep cuts to safety-net services and programs, because at the end of the day, people understand that we are all in this together,” said **Randi Weingarten, President of the United Federation of Teachers.**

Stiglitz wrote to the Governor and legislative leaders, “increases on higher-income families are the least damaging mechanism for closing state fiscal deficits in the short run. Reductions in government spending on goods and services, or reductions in transfer payments to lower-income families, are likely to be more damaging to the economy in the short run than tax increases focused on higher-income families.[i]”

The One New York: Fighting for Fairness Coalition includes over 150 organizations and counting who advocate for and serve New Yorkers needing services such as: AIDS services, child care, child welfare, education, health care, homeless housing, housing, immigrant services, income support, legal services, people with disabilities, senior services, youth services and other vital areas services.

Organizations represented in the coalition include: The Legal Aid Society; Citizen Action of NYC; Coalition for the Homeless; Working Families Party; Education Voters of New York; Alliance for Quality Education; New York Immigration Coalition; NY ACORN; Citizens' Committee for Children of New York; Campaign for Fiscal Equity; Legal Services NYC; Human Services Council; United Neighborhood Houses; and the United Federation of Teachers and American Federation of Teachers.

The Better Choice Budget Campaign is made up of over 100 community, religious, education, labor and human services organizations from throughout New York State who, since 2002, have been advocating for progressive revenue solutions for budget balancing.

The full text of the One New York Coalition’s recent letter to the Governor and the full list of signers is below. The full list of Better Choice Budget Campaign members is also below.

ONE NEW YORK: FIGHTING FOR FAIRNESS

October 28, 2008

Honorable David Paterson
Governor - New York State
Executive Chamber
The Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Paterson:

While all New Yorkers are reeling from the current economic crisis, few are likely to be harder hit than the poorest New Yorkers.

While New York State must show restraint in its expenditures and should invest public dollars prudently, the implementation of across the board budget reductions will lead to unimaginable human strain and decimate an already fragile social infrastructure, killing jobs and reducing spending in every community at precisely the moment when economic stimulus is needed.

At this stage in the economic cycle, budget reductions of the sort envisioned will only compound the effects of private sector job losses, further slowing the state's economy. Rather, the state must protect funding for core and safety net services to help counteract what is likely to be a severe economic downturn with increased human needs.

It is simply not possible, nor prudent for the State of New York to cut its way out of a budget deficit of the magnitude projected. The prospect of additional reductions to core and social safety net services is untenable and belies the reality that poor New Yorkers require more help, not less, in these difficult economic times.

In light of this dire economic situation, state elected officials must take necessary steps to address both sides of the budget ledger – Revenue and Expense – and fairness must be the guiding principle in this effort.

We are calling on state leaders to explicitly identify the concrete revenue raising options that they will enact – in order to protect poor New Yorkers from shouldering an undue and unjust burden of the faltering economy

Sincerely,

1199SEIU Child Care Corporation • Advocates for Children • AIDS Community Services of Western New York • AIDS-Related Community Services, (ARCS) • AIM Independent Living Center • Alliance for Quality Education • ARISE Coalition • Asian American Federation • Barrier Free Living • Black Equity Alliance • Brooklyn Center for Independence of the Disabled • Campaign for Fiscal Equity • Canaan Senior Service Center • Center for Independence of the Disabled, NY • Child Care Council - CUNY • Child Care Inc. • Children's Aid Society • Citizen Action of NY/ CASF • Citizens Advice Bureau • Citizens Committee for Children of New York • Citywide Council on High Schools • Class Size Matters • Coalition for a District Alternative • Coalition for Asian American Children and Families • Coalition for the Homeless • Coalition of Behavioral Health Agencies • College of Mount Saint Vincent - Institute for Immigrant Concerns • Commission on the Public's Health System • Community Access • Community Board 7, Manhattan • Community Board 11, Manhattan • Community Health Care Association of New York State • Community Voices Heard • Comunilife, Inc. • Connect, Inc. • Connecting to Advantages • Council of Family and Child Caring Agencies • Council of Senior Centers and Services of New York City,

Inc. • Cypress Hills Child Care Corporation • Cypress Hills Local Development Corporation • District Council 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO • District Council 37, Local 1549, AFSCME • East Side House Settlement • Economic Justice and Social Welfare Network • Education Voters of New York • Educational Alliance • Empire Justice Center • Empire State Economic Security Campaign • Episcopal Social Services • Family Justice • Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies • FECS • Fiscal Policy Institute • Flanbwayan Haitian Literacy Project/Haitian Women for Haitian Refugees • Freedom Community Center • Friends and Relatives of Institutionalized Aged, Inc. • Gay Men's Health Crisis • Goddard Riverside Community Center • Good Jobs New York • Grand Street Settlement House • Greater Chinatown Community Association • Haitian Americans United for Progress • Hamilton-Madison House • HANAC, Inc. • Harlem United Community AIDS Center, Inc. • Henry Street Settlement • Highbridge Community Life Center • Hispanic AIDS Forum, Inc. • Hispanic Federation of New York State • Hispanic Senior Action Counsel • HIV Law Project, Inc. • Homeless Services United • Housing Works • Hudson Guild • Human Services Council • Hunger Action Network of New York State • Institute for Community Living • Institute for the Puerto Rican/Hispanic Elderly, Inc. • Internationals Network for Public Schools • Isabella Geriatric Center • Jamaica Service Program for Older Adults • Korean American Family Service Center • Legal Action Center • Legal Aid Society • Legal Information for Families Today • Legal Services NYC • Lenox Hill Neighborhood House • Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center, Inc. • Lower East Side Family Union • Make the Road New York • Medicare Rights Center • Melrose Senior Center • Metro New York Health Care for All Campaign • MFY Legal Services • Midwood Development Corp. • Mosholu Montefiore Community Center • NAACP Metropolitan Council • National Association of Social Workers, NYC Chapter • National Black Leadership Commission on AIDS • National Center for Schools and Communities at Fordham • Neighborhood Family Services Coalition • New Settlement Apartments • New York ACORN • New York AIDS Coalition • New York Citizens' Committee on Aging, Inc. • New York City Central Labor Council • New York City Employment and Training Coalition • New York Civic Participation Project/32BJ • New York Immigrant Coalition • New York State Coalition for School Based Health Center • New York State NAACP • New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness • NY Jobs with Justice • New York City AIDS Housing Network • NYC Coalition for Educational Justice • New York State Public Employees Federation, Region 10 • New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness • One Stop Senior Services • Partnership For The Homeless • Phipps Community Development Corporation • Pratt Center for Community Development • Professional Staff Congress - CUNY • Project FIND • Project Renewal • Safe Horizon • SCAN-New York • Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy • SEIU Local 32BJ • Service Program for Older People, Inc. • Stanley M. Isaacs Neighborhood Center, Inc. • Staten Island Inter-Agency Council for the Aging • Staten Island Legal Services • Strycker's Bay Neighborhood Council, Inc. • Supportive Housing Network of New York • The After-School Corporation • The AIDS Council of Northeastern New York • The Arab-American Family Support Center • The Bridge Inc. • The Center for Arts Education • The Center for Law and Social Justice, Medgar Evers College- CUNY • The Children's Village • The Committee for Hispanic Children and Families, Inc. • The Bridge Inc. • The Fortune Society • The Geriatric Mental Health Alliance of New York • The International Center in New York • The Muslim Women's Institute for Research and Development • The School for International Studies • Thorpe Family Residence, Inc. • Time Out from Testing • UAW LOCAL 2325 Association of Legal Aid Attorneys (AFL-CIO) • UAW Region 9A • United Community Centers, Inc. • United Federation of Teachers • United Neighborhood Houses • University Settlement Society • Urban Justice Center • Urban Pathways, Inc. • Village Care of New York • Violence Intervention Program, Inc. • Welfare Rights Initiative • West Side Campaign Against Hunger • Westchester Disabled On the Move Inc. • Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation • Working Families Party • YKASEC- Empowering the Korean American Community

Organizations Supporting Better Choice Budget Campaign

ACCORD Corp.
Adirondack Community Action Programs, Inc.
AFSCME New York
Albany Presbytery
American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)-Local 1151
ARISE (A Regional Initiative to Support Empowerment)
Association to Benefit Children
Capital Area council of Churches
Capital district Community Loan Fund
Capital Region Ecumenical Organization
Center for Working Families
Central New York Citizens in Action, Inc
Chemung County Housing Coalition
NYS Child Care Coordinating Council
Citizen Action of New York State
Citizens Committee for Children of New York
Citizens Environmental Coalition
Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA)
Class Size Matters
Coalition for Asian American Children and Families
Coalition for Economic Justice (Buffalo)
Coalition for the Homeless
Community Service Society
Cortland County Community Action Program
Delaware Opportunities Inc.
District Council 1707 (DC-1707)
District Council 37 (DC-37)
Dutchess Outreach, Inc.
Elmira Community Kitchen
Empire Justice Center
Empire State Economic Security Campaign (ES2)
Environmental Advocates of New York State
Faith and Hunger Network of NYS
Fiscal Policy Institute
FOCUS Churches of Albany
Grace Smith House, Inc. (Rochester)
Greater New York Labor Religion Coalition
Greater NY Labor-Religion Coalition
Green Education and Legal Fund
Grey Panthers - NYC
Health and Welfare Council of Long Island
HELP USA
Homeless Alliance of WNY, Inc. (Buffalo)
House of Mercy, Rochester
Housing Works, Inc.
Hunger Action Network of NYS
Joint Council for Economic Opportunity of Clinton and Franklin Counties
Justice and Peace Center
Labor-Religion Coalition – Chemung County
Labor-Religion Coalition of the Capital District
Leviticus 25:23 Alternative Fund, Inc
Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service
Lutheran Statewide Advocacy
Medicaid Matters
Metro Justice (Rochester)

MicroBizBuffalo
MicroBizNewYork
Mohawk Valley Community Action Agency
Mount Vernon United Tenants
Neighborhood Preservation Coalition of NYS
New York City Coalition Against Hunger
New York City AIDS Housing Network (NYCAHN)
New York Children's Action Network (NYCAN)
New York Jobs with Justice
New York State AFL-CIO
New York State Alliance for Retired Americans
New York State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NYSCADV)
New York State Community Action Association (NYSCAA)
New York State Episcopal Public Policy Network
New York State Labor Religion Coalition
New York State United Teachers (NYSUT)
New York State Weatherization Directors Association
New York Statewide Senior Action Council
New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness
Nurses United CWA Local 1168
Nutrition Consortium of NYS
NY Universal Living Wage Campaign
NYC AIDS Housing Network (NYCAHN)
Opportunities for Broome, Inc.
Partnership for the Homeless
Partnership for the Public Good (Buffalo Coalition)
Prevent Child Abuse New York
Progressive Research & Action Center, Inc.
Public Employees Federation (PEF)
Public Policy and Education Fund
Public Utility Law Project (PULP)
Real Majority Project (Poughkeepsie)
Regional Synod of Albany, Reformed Church in American
Rochester Poor People's Alliance
Rural Housing Coalition of NYS
Rural Opportunities, Inc.
Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.
Schenectady Community Action Program
Schenectady Inner City Ministry
Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy (SCAA)
Sierra Club Atlantic Chapter
Sisters of Charity of New York, Office of Justice and Peace
Southern Tier Labor-Religion Coalition
Staten Island Welfare Advocacy Network
The Interfaith Alliance of NYS
Unity House
Van Wie Group, LLC
Warren-Hamilton Counties Community Action Agency
Welfare Rights Initiative of Hunter College
West Side Campaign Against Hunger
Westchester Community Opportunity Program
Westchester Progressive Forum
Women's Center for Education and Career Advancement
Women's Enterprise Development Center
